

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

July 28, 2010

Mr. Kevin Concannon
Under Secretary, Food, Nutrition, and Consumer Services
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Jamie Whitten Bldg., Room 216E
1400 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Under Secretary Concannon:

We the undersigned Members of the California Congressional Delegation write to urge your full and fair consideration for the state of California's request that the USDA allow a necessary change to the state's "cash out" policy. This policy negatively impacts many California Supplemental Security Income (SSI) recipients.

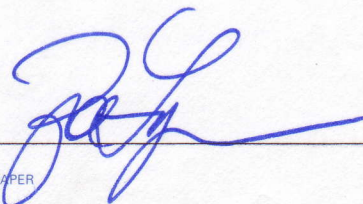
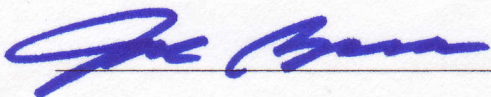
As you are aware, California is the only state that currently does not allow its recipients of federal SSI benefits to apply for assistance through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). Instead California has opted to increase its matching State Supplementary Payment (SSP) to SSI beneficiaries by \$10 a month. This policy has negatively affected SNAP participation rates throughout the state. Furthermore, recent increases in SNAP benefit levels from both the 2008 Farm Bill and the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act have further heightened the inequities that California SSI recipients face in these uncertain economic times.

In a letter dated April 1, 2010, John Wagner, the Director of the California Department of Social Services (CDSS), wrote you requesting the USDA allow CDSS to eliminate its cash-out policy in cases where a "pure" SSI household would benefit. We respectfully urge you swiftly approve this request from Director Wagner. Doing so would allow "pure" SSI households to receive the same food assistance that is available to most other low-income people in California, while continuing to maintain benefits for other households containing an SSI recipient.

We know you share our concerns over the low rate of SNAP participation in our state – which is estimated to cost California almost \$7 billion annually in lost economic activity. Granting the CDSS's request to allow this long overdue policy change would provide an immediate boost to California's SNAP participation rates, and would also serve as an important engine for economic growth in our state.

We appreciate your attention to this matter, and look forward to working with you to ensure California better utilizes SNAP and other beneficial federal nutrition programs.

Sincerely,



Lynn Woolsey

M.G. Z...

Mike Shy

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Liz Capps

Carl

Susan Davis

Bunny a Waxman

Jameson

Sam Fan

Donis Matsun · Barham Lee

Judy Chu

Luella Kypal-Allard

Linda J. Simon

Laura Beluchon

Pete Stark

Signatories:

Rep. Joe Baca
Rep. Zoe Lofgren
Rep. Lynn Woolsey
Rep. Anna Eshoo
Rep. Mike Thompson
Rep. Jerry McNerney
Rep. Lois Capps
Rep. Dennis Cardoza
Rep. Susan Davis
Rep. Henry Waxman
Rep. Xavier Becerra
Rep. Sam Farr
Rep. Doris Matsui
Rep. Barbara Lee
Rep. Judy Chu
Rep. Lucille Roybal-Allard
Rep. Linda Sánchez
Rep. Laura Richardson
Rep. Pete Stark